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STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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Date: February 20, 2009

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Michigan Department of Agriculture Extends Bovine TB Strategic Plan Comment Period

Memorandum of Understanding part of the Strategic Plan to eradicate bovine TB from Michigan Livestock

Lansing, Mich. - The Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) is extending the public comment period from February 19 to March 5, 2009 regarding the proposed changes in the strategic plan to eradicate bovine Tuberculosis (TB) from Michigan cattle and bison. The plan incorporates two years of input from livestock producers and government agencies.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), MDA, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regarding bovine TB response must be revisited and updated annually. The MOU contains detailed commitments from the various departments and outlines the responsibilities of each agency to maintain Michigan's split state status.

"Much of the industry has been battling this disease for 10 years, and if our surveillance testing continues to show no evidence of bovine TB outside of the endemic area, the new MOU will put Michigan in a position to shrink the legal boundaries of the bovine TB area," said Dr. Steven Halstead, State Veterinarian. "Input from stakeholders, producers and the public is a critical component to crafting the bovine TB strategic plan as it directly impacts them."

MDA, the Michigan Department of Community Health bovine TB Coordinator, and Michigan State University Extension will hold five public meetings next week in the northern Lower Peninsula to educate cattle and bison producers about the proposed program changes. The meetings will be:

Wednesday, February 25, at 10:00 a.m.
Ogemaw County Extension Office
205 S. Eighth Street, West Branch

Wednesday, February 25, at 2:00 p.m.
University Center, Room 112
80 Livingston Boulevard, Gaylord

Wednesday, February 25, at 6:00 p.m.
University Center Room 112
80 Livingston Boulevard, Gaylord

Thursday, February 26, at 10:00 a.m.
Carnegie Building
451 E. Mitchell Street, Petoskey

Thursday, February 26, at 2:00 p.m.
MDA Regional Office
16860 M-32, Atlanta

MDA's proposal creates a new "Compartment One (I) Zone" and moves Antrim, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Crawford, Emmet, and Otsego counties out of the Modified Accredited Zone (MAZ) into the Modified Accredited Advanced Zone (MAAZ) as western border counties.

"Owners of cattle and bison in Compartment I and the MAZ will be encouraged to use wildlife risk mitigation tools (such as fencing feed, using dogs, and feeding away from wooded areas) if they want to sell cattle with no strings attached to other parts of Michigan," said Halstead. "Strings include a whole-herd bovine TB test for farms that purchase cattle from Compartment I, if risk-mitigation tools have not been incorporated into the farm management practices."

Additionally a separate Compartment II Zone (Arenac, Clare, Gladwin, Grand Traverse, Iosco, Kalkaska, Missaukee, Ogemaw, Osceola, Roscommon, and Wexford counties) will be established south and west of the MAZ border. In border zones, disease surveillance and wildlife risk mitigation efforts will be more rigorous compared to the remaining Lower Peninsula.

Compartment III of the MAAZ (the remaining counties south of Compartments I and II) is expected to be moved to TB-Free status when USDA feels confident that bovine TB has not been moved to the area via cattle and bison.

In 2009, MDA will test cattle and bison herds throughout the state that have previously received bovine TB exposed animals and have not had an additional whole herd test since the initial trace test cleared them.

The *proposed* strategic plan may be found at the following link, under "Spotlight":
<http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases>

Public comment on the proposed strategic plan should be emailed to:
DavisJ6@michigan.gov

OR

Postmark and return the form no later than *March 5, 2009* to:
Ms. Davis
Michigan Department of Agriculture
Animal Industry Division
P.O. Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909

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